



**The Tennessee Department of Labor
& Workforce Development**
Nashville, TN
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NEWS RELEASE

James Neeley
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 07, 2003

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Communications Officer

NASHVILLE-Tennessee's unemployment rate for the month of February is 4.7 percent, the same as the January rate, Commissioner of Labor & Workforce Development James Neeley announced today. The state rate remains below the February national rate of 5.8 percent.

"The February unemployment rates reflect a sluggish economy with continuing job losses in manufacturing, retail trade and transportation," Neeley said.

January to February figures showed increases in government jobs of 8,500, with 7,500 of these in state and local educational services due to increases in the number of student workers and substitute teachers. Jobs in the leisure and hospitality industries grew by 2,400, and educational/health services employment rose 2,400.

Seasonal declines from January to February 2003 occurred in retail trade, down by 3,100 jobs. The hardest hit area was clothing/clothing accessories stores, which lost 1,200 jobs. Manufacturing continued to see a decline with 1,900 jobs lost, and transportation/warehousing jobs were down by 600.

From February 2002 to February 2003, health care and social assistance jobs increased by 12,200, with increases in ambulatory health care (+4,300), hospitals (+3,800), nursing and residential care facilities (+2,800), and social assistance (+1,300). Professional and business services also added 12,200 jobs over the year.

Over the year job losses in the manufacturing industry totaled 14,400, with durable goods down by 7,100 jobs, and nondurable goods decreasing by 7,300 jobs. Retail trade declined by 6,500 jobs and construction declined by 4,700 jobs. Transportation/warehousing jobs declined by 4,100.

LABOR FORCE ESTIMATES SUMMARY - TENNESSEE

February 2003 (preliminary) - BM2002

<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate		Rate Change
				Feb.	Jan.	
UNITED STATES	145,858,000	137,408,000	8,450,000	5.8 %	5.7 %	0.1 %
TENNESSEE	2,888,600	2,752,200	136,400	4.7	4.7	0.0

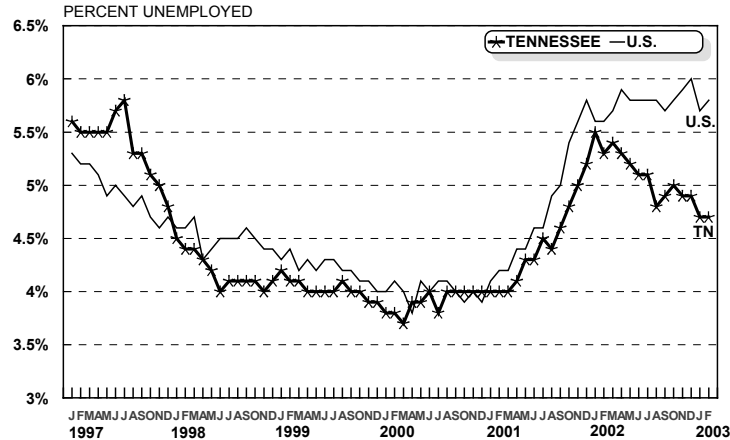
Not Seasonally Adjusted

UNITED STATES	145,693,000	136,433,000	9,260,000	6.4 %	6.5 %	-0.1 %
TENNESSEE	2,859,500	2,713,300	146,200	5.1	5.4	-0.3

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES - U.S. & TENNESSEE

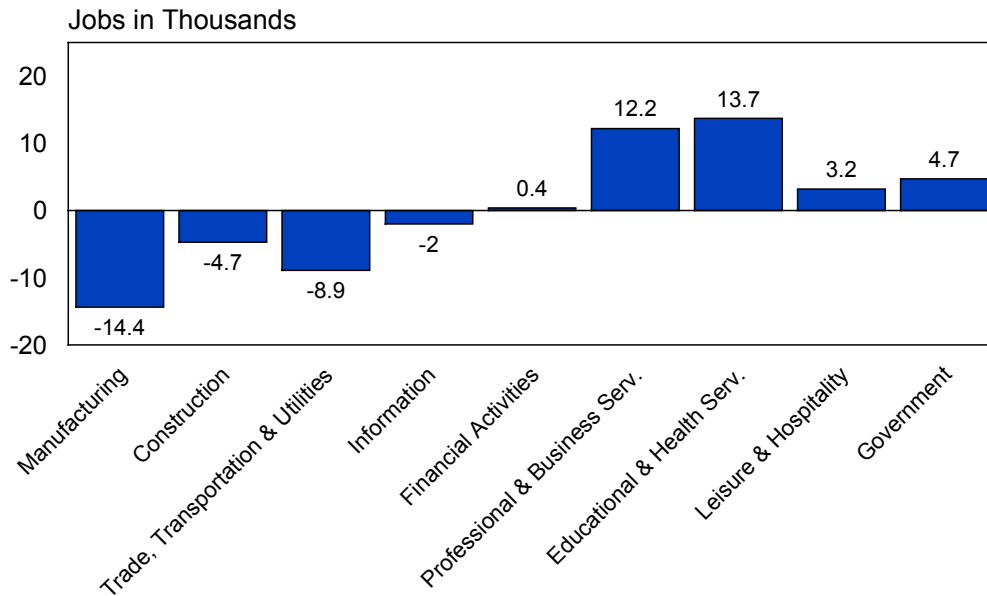
JANUARY 1997 - PRESENT

(seasonally adjusted)



OVER THE YEAR JOB CHANGES

By Major Industry (February 2002-2003)



*** ATTENTION: County and MSA rates will be released on Friday, April 11, 2003.**

(03-022)

NOTE: Information will be available on the Internet; enter "http://www.state.tn.us/labor-wfd/labor_figures".

NOTE: Tennessee's employment and unemployment statistics are based on two major surveys. The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a survey by place of residence providing estimates on the number of people in the labor force, total employment, unemployment, and the unemployment rate. Beginning in January 1992, the CPS data are seasonally adjusted for all states as directed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The business survey collects data by place of work and creates information about jobs in various industries. The business survey data are non-seasonally adjusted at this time.